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## R Street's rebirth is city vision

**Restaurants, offices, businesses, condos to line the corridor of warehouses.**

**By Ralph Montañó -- Bee Staff Writer**

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Envision a bicycle tour along a green promenade along the Sacramento River. Turning toward midtown, the tour travels along a street without curbs where office buildings coexist with restaurants, businesses, condominiums and apartments.

Last week, city officials shared with the public that vision of R Street, once a thriving blue-collar boulevard.

The open house, held in the recently completed Lincoln Plaza West, 400 Q St., highlighted the variety of developments that have begun or are being planned for the R Street corridor. About 200 people attended the event.

"It's an amazing time to be on R Street," Sacramento City Councilman Robert Fong said.

Officials highlighted 16 projects on R Street between the river and 29th Street that are either built, planned or approved for construction. An additional 10 sites along R Street are being looked at as "significant opportunity sites."

"It's already a unique place, and we want to keep it that way," said Todd Leon, R Street development manager for the Capitol Area Development Authority.

As part of the event, CADA announced the launch of an R Street Corridor Web site, [www.cadanet.org/devel/r\\_street.html](http://www.cadanet.org/devel/r_street.html). The site details the street's history and will chart the progress of its development.

According to the Web site, R Street began as a levee upon which the Sacramento Valley Railroad was built. The berm was removed between 1888 and 1890 after it was no longer necessary.

The corridor grew and thrived from the 1890s to the 1920s. Railroad and steamboat traffic made it a regional shipping hub. Many of the historic buildings on R Street were built during this period.

The Depression brought the construction of four Bay Area bridges, which eventually would siphon away steamboat traffic and end Sacramento's thriving riverfront. R Street was left in decline by the shift.

There is a new plan for Sacramento's riverfront - a development known as the Docks. The development would run from Old Sacramento to Miller Park and include retail, residential and a lively river promenade. Laura Sainz with the city's Economic Development Department said plans for the project could be approved within a year.

Connecting R Street to the Docks development will be the California Public Employees' Retirement System's complex. Bob Langhi, a CalPERS real estate investment officer, said he envisions a street scene running from Second to Ninth streets that incorporates what people see when they look at Lincoln Plaza West.

"From there, we will dovetail a seamless streetscape, running from Second to 19th Street," he said.

CADA will handle much of the street design for the area from Ninth to 19th streets, Leon said.

The design will speak to the area's industrial roots. The street will remain without curbs, and the warehouses will be preserved as they are updated and modified. The street would be an ideal location for festivals or outdoor markets, Leon said.

"We are redefining neighborhoods but, more importantly, creating new neighborhoods," Sacramento City Councilman Ray Tretheway said.

Beyond the public agencies involved in the development, the city also is seeing more private interest on R Street from 19th to 29th streets, said Jeanne Corcoran with the city's Development Services Department.

She said the city is trying to encourage more growth by streamlining the development process and easing some restrictions along R Street.

City Councilman Steve Cohn said he also is excited about the future of R Street but seeks to add a neighborhood park.

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[R Street projects](#) [261k GIF]

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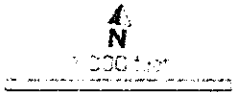
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# R Street projects

The industrial heart of 19th-century Sacramento is undergoing a 21st-century transformation. For a decade, the city has pushed a plan to remake R, S and Q streets into a lively mixed-use neighborhood of shops, offices and housing. This plan is now starting to produce results. At the west end of R Street is the expanding California Public Employees' Retirement System headquarters. A new Safeway complex anchors the street's eastern stretch.

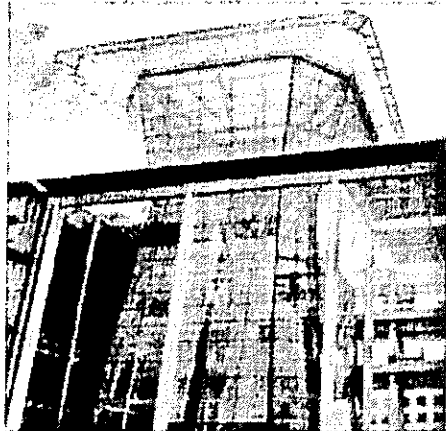
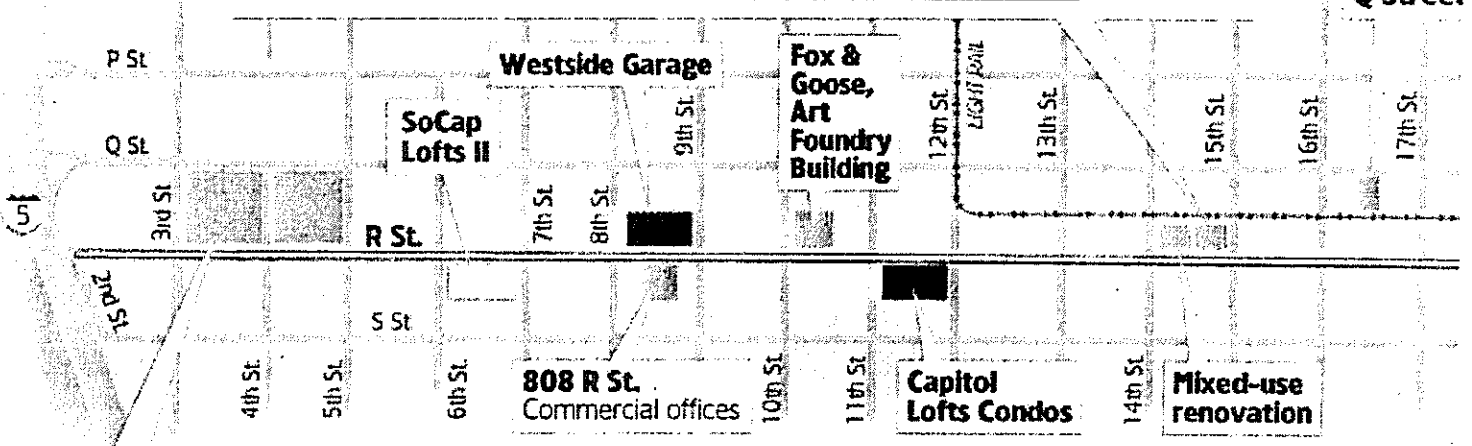
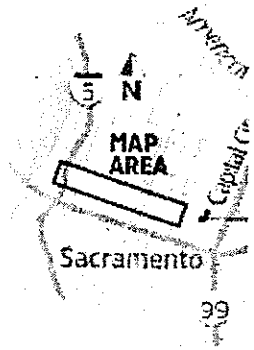
## PROJECT STATUS:

- Existing/built
- Approved/  
under construction
- Planned



**Icon Restaurant, Empire Nightclub and La Raza Galeria Posada**

Sacramento Bee file, 2005/  
Jay Mather



**Lincoln Plaza West**  
\$249 million expansion of the California Public Employees' Retirement System headquarters. CalPERS also plans to build about 300,000 square feet of housing on adjacent land it owns or is planning to buy.

Sacramento Bee file, 2005.  
Paul Kitagaki Jr.



